

Minutes of a regular meeting of the Town Council of the Town of Marion, Virginia held in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building on January 18, 2022 at 5:30 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Mayor David Helms, Vice-Mayor Dr. Jim Gates, Jim Barker, Tricia Spencer, Bill Weaver, Larry Carter and Avery Cornett Council Members; Town Manager Bill Rush, Town Clerk Cindy Stanley; Town Attorney Mark Fenyk; Smyth County News Representative Stephanie Porter-Nichols; Police Chief John Clair, Fire Chief Richard Keesling, Purchasing Agent Billy Hamm, Recreation Director Jamie Hall and Economic Development Director Ken Heath.

**ABSENT:** Suzanne Jennings.

**VISITORS:** Charles Wassum, Charles Hayden and Rex Anders.

**INVOCATION/PLEDGE TO THE FLAG:** Chief Clair rendered the invocation. Mayor Helms led the Pledge to the Flag.

**MINUTES:** Upon motion of Mr. Weaver, seconded by Dr. Gates and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, the minutes of the meeting held January 3, 2022 were approved as written. Messrs Barker, Gates, Spencer, Weaver, Carter and Cornett voted affirmatively.

**AGENDA:** Upon motion of Dr. Gates, seconded by Mr. Weaver and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, the agenda was approved as distributed with the removal of two items; VDH & DEQ Public Hearings and VRS 457 Plan.

**PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS:** None.

**ACCOUNTS:** Upon motion of Mr. Weaver, seconded by Mr. Carter and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, the accounts payable were approved for payment as submitted in the amount of \$1,705,336.63. Messrs Dr. Gates, Barker, Spencer, Weaver, Carter and Cornett voted affirmatively.

Chief Clair distributed the results of the VDOT traffic study on Strother Street. The study indicated it is a perception of speed rather than actual speeding and a large volume of traffic. Chief Clair recommends utilizing some traffic calming attempts. The Police Department has applied for a grant for traffic survey equipment. Chief Clair gave an overview of the Urban Archery request. He researched town code and met with local biologist. The first question is does council want to allow hunting and secondly would council want to extend the season. A town code change would be required to allow hunting and to participate in the extended season (Urban Archery). The biologist was clear that Marion is overpopulated with deer. He is willing to discuss with council. All regulations of the Department of Wildlife Resources would apply to all hunting. Discussion ensued. Upon motion of Mr. Weaver, seconded by Mr. Cornett and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, a Public Hearing will be set for February 7, 2022 to address the issue to allow hunting in Marion town limits.

Chief Keesling reported the year end totals will be in the next council packet.

Mr. Heath distributed the annual report for his department.

Mr. Rush noted there have been 5 applications received for the Zoning Administrator/Planning Administrator/BAUD Director. Mr. Rush noted he is prepared to ask for the first authorization of the ARPA funds. The Marion EDA met last Thursday and that board is willing to help implement the BAUD Program. The EDA will need funding to begin implementation. Mr. Rush recommends \$500,000 to be disbursed in increments based on need and to be fully disbursed by December 31, 2022. There will be benchmarks to measure how the program is progressing. Upon motion of Dr. Gates, seconded by Mr. Cornett and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, an allocation of \$500,000 of ARPA funds will be disbursed to the Marion EDA in increments, as and when needed and fully dispersed by December 31, 2022, to begin implementation of the BAUD Program. Mr. Rush reported the last major renovation of the town hall was approximately 20 years ago. Mr. Rush recommends RFP for Architectural Services. Upon motion of Dr. Gates, seconded by Mr. Weaver and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, this item was referred to the Buildings and Grounds Committee. Mr. Rush reviewed the town pool renovations noting \$300,000 has already been authorized for the upgrade. Mr. Rush distributed a proposed floor plan for upgrading the bathrooms. He also requested consideration of \$70,000 for a filter upgrade, \$50,000 for an elevated playground and \$90,000 for roofing, siding, etc. Upon motion of Mr. Carter, seconded by Mr. Cornett and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, the town will proceed with pool renovations for a waterpark, not to exceed \$525,000 as of this meeting, using ARPA funding. The I & I study continues with the mobilization of a diagnostic team utilizing the sewer camera and correlator. The team is identifying all sewer manholes, clearing access and raising them to surface elevation.

Upon motion of Mr. Weaver, seconded by Dr. Gates and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, the meeting was adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

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Mayor

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Clerk